



Congressman Paul E. Gillmor

THE GILLMOR BULLETIN

June 2004

**CONTACT CONGRESSMAN
PAUL E. GILLMOR**

In Washington:

1203 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6405

In Ohio:

96 South Washington
Street, Suite 400
Tiffin, OH 44883
419-448-9016

613 West Third Street
Defiance, OH 43512
419-782-1996

130 Shady Lane Drive
Norwalk, OH 44857
419-668-0206

Toll Free in Ohio:

Phone: 1-800-541-6446
Fax: 1-800-278-8203

Online:

www.house.gov/gillmor

Via Email:

paul.gillmor@mail.house.gov

Gillmor Washington Update

As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent Ohio's Fifth Congressional District here in Washington, DC.

In order to keep the citizens of the Fifth District better informed and up to date on my activities in Washington, DC and back home in Ohio, I have published this fourth edition of my monthly newsletter. It is my goal to provide you with the information you need to stay informed on the issues important to Ohio. In this edition of my Monthly Update, I have focused on the important events that have taken place in the month of May and the upcoming June events in the Fifth District. I hope that you will find this information beneficial. Please contact me should you have any questions or comments.

Memorial Day: Honoring Our Fallen Soldiers

I was honored as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) to be a part of the American delegation visiting the World War II Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial in Colleville-sur Mer, France to honor the 60th anniversary of the D-Day invasion. The NATO PA acts as the parliamentary arm of NATO and a forum for legislators from the nineteen member nations.

It was a great privilege to honor the American patriots who fought and died for our freedoms in World War II on the beaches of Normandy. Within these sacred grounds rest the true icons of American history.

The cemetery is located on a cliff overlooking Omaha Beach and the English Channel in France and spans one hundred and seventy two acres. Contained in the cemetery are 9,386 American dead, many of whom died during the D-Day invasion commencing on June 6, 1944. In addition, the walls of the Garden of the Missing are inscribed with the



Congressman Paul Gillmor laying a wreath at "The Spirit of American Youth Rising From The Waves" in Normandy, France.

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names of 1,557 missing Americans who have no grave. There are three Medal of Honor winners, four women, and 33 pairs of brothers buried side by side.

As a veteran of the United States Air Force, being a member of the American delegation to honor the 60th anniversary of the D-Day invasion was an especially memorable and moving experience. The intention of the ceremony was to pay homage to our nation's soldiers by commencing the 60th anniversary celebration of their brave sacrifice. I am proud to have served my country and as always I am proud of the opportunity to celebrate our heroes.

Tax Relief: Reducing the Burden

Taxes are a necessary part of American life. From these monies we receive among other benefits: police and fire protection, national defense, welfare for the needy, and food for the hungry. However, the imposition of taxes should not burden the American taxpayers. A person should never question whether they can afford to attend college, buy a home, or feed their family. The relief provided by the House of Representatives in the past four weeks will continue to make possible the dreams of all Americans.

During the month of May, the House of Representatives dedicated itself to passing continued tax relief for all Americans. The work of the House of Representatives ensured that the marriage penalty relief, Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) relief, 10 percent tax bracket, and the \$1,000 child tax credit remain intact into the future. Each measure provides important support for the American working person and is vital to the continued growth of our national economy.

First, the House renewed the marriage penalty tax relief originally passed in



2001 and signed into law under President Bush which phased out the penalties that had required a married couple earning similar incomes to pay more than two single taxpayers filing individually. The relief passed by Congress this year extends the increased standard deduction, the 15% income tax rate bracket, and the increased Earned Income Credit (EIC). Marriage penalty relief returns \$12 billion to 36 million working couples. This relief alone benefits

more than 290,000 married people within Ohio's Fifth Congressional District.

The following week, Congress extended the relief of the Middle Class Alternative Minimum Tax which spared 8 million Americans from tax increases. The Alternative Minimum Tax was created 30 years ago to prevent multiple tax deductions and write-offs to avoid paying income taxes but was increased by President Clinton without thresholds for inflation, forcing millions to pay additional taxes. This measure saves 11 million taxpayers from an average tax increase of \$1,520 per year.

Next, the House extended the 10-percent tax bracket for low-income citizens. This measure ensures that the first \$14,000 of taxable income per couple or

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\$7,000 of taxable income per individual is taxed at 10% rather than 15%. If the House had failed to act, the bracket would shrink each year and disappear in 2011. By extending the 10-percent tax bracket, 73 million Americans will be spared from higher taxes with 24 million of those workers kept from entering a higher tax bracket. This legislation provides 1.1 million Ohioans with an average savings of more than \$2,600 over the next decade.

Finally, the House made permanent the \$1,000 child tax credit which was set to decrease to \$500 after 2010. The new provisions prevent a tax hike of \$610 on 30 million taxpayers with 49 million children. Over 120,000 Fifth District children will be spared from higher tax burdens on their family. In addition, the House plan increases income levels to extend the child tax credit to middle-income families by raising the phase out to \$250,000 for married couples and \$125,000 for single parents.

I am proud to have co-sponsored each of these pieces of legislation and I am confident that the actions of the House have continued to put your money back into your pockets. These bipartisan measures each passed the U.S. House with at least sixty-six percent of the vote. Now each bill will face the scrutiny of the U.S. Senate. It is my sincere desire that my Senate colleagues continue to support the citizens of the Fifth District by providing the tax relief we deserve.

Dot Kids: Protecting Children Online

On May 6th of this year the oversight hearings were conducted by the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, regarding the Dot Kids Internet Domain. Their purpose was to provide continued support for the ".kids.us" domain name. I was a proud cosponsor of The Dot Kids Domain Name Act of 2001 and was happy to see it signed into law by President Bush on December 4, 2002. ".kids.us" is an online domain where groups and individuals can voluntarily place child-friendly material and appropriate content for children and parents.



Congressman Gillmor folds a flag for
Parkway Local Schools

After eight months, the ".kids.us" domain has over 1800 names registered and 13 live sites. The domain which serves as a subdomain of the ".us" country code must contain material that is "suitable for minors" and "not harmful to minors." These webpages cannot contain outside links above the ".kids.us" domain and will restrict the use of online chat.

The hearings served to generate important discussion on furthering the

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successes of the ".kids.us" domain. It is one of my principal duties to provide further protections for the children of the citizens of Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. To that end, the use of the ".kids.us" domain name is a vital tool in preventing the bombardment of inappropriate material via email, chat-rooms, and misleading websites to our children. We will continue to develop safe online services for children in an effort to counter the filth which has unfortunately invaded the World Wide Web.

Healthcare: Increasing Consumer Choice

In May, the House of Representatives passed a very important piece of legislation, giving Americans greater control over their money and health care choices. The bill would provide up to \$500 per year of unused funds in Flexible Savings Accounts (FSA) for use in the next year or to be contributed to Cafeteria Plans, also known as Health Savings Accounts (HSA).

Flexible Savings Accounts are tax-free employer-sponsored benefit plans that reimburse employees for qualified health care expenses. Health Savings

Accounts are tax-free savings accounts that can be used to pay for medical expenses incurred by individuals, spouses, or dependents. These accounts are one more way to help with the rising health care costs in America.



The money saved in such accounts belongs to the American people, not the government. By making this change, people will not feel pressured to quickly

spend unused funds before the end of the year. I also hope that the increased flexibility of these accounts will encourage more people to take advantage of this extra tax-free savings.

Current law does not allow monies remaining in these accounts to be carried over to the next year. However, the ability to rollover funds in these savings accounts to the next year will encourage more employers to participate without fear of losing money at the end of the year.

Healthcare: Greater Access for Small Business Employees

Last month, the House of Representatives also passed another important piece of healthcare reform legislation that will give uninsured working families a new hope for a solution to their health care crises. As a cosponsor of the Small

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Business Health Fairness Act of 2004, which will improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses to provide medical care for their employees, I was happy to see it pass by a vote of 252 to 162.

There are currently more than 43 million Americans without health insurance. Of these, 60 percent work for or rely on small employers without the means to provide health care coverage for their employees. This legislation allows businesses to band together for the purpose of buying health insurance as a group. The use of association health plans (AHP), which have been certified by the Labor Department and must abide by all HIPAA rules and cannot exclude high-risk individuals, will enable small businesses to use the power of the marketplace and their influence as a driving force of the American economy to provide health care coverage for employees.

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), small businesses obtaining insurance through AHPs will enjoy premium reductions of 13 percent on average; moreover, the CBO also reports an additional 330,000 to two million American workers and their families would obtain health insurance through AHPs, while private studies put this estimate at nearly eight million.

This legislation was originally passed by the House of Representatives on June 19, 2003. Unfortunately, our Senate colleagues have still failed to act on this very important measure leaving the small businesses in the Fifth District without the health care reform that could end the health care crisis which restricts job growth. I hope the second time around that the U.S. Senate will act to provide the citizens and small businesses of the Fifth District with the coverage they demand.



The Economy: Continued Growth and Job Creation



Congressman Gillmor Tours American Fine Sinter
in Tiffin, OH

The American economy has suffered through some tough economic times in recent memory but the data released by the Department of Labor (DOL) at the end of May seems to establish our clear progress and recovery. The State of Ohio has enjoyed a 34.8 percent increase in employment so far in the first five months of 2004. A total of 3,880 Ohioans are settling into new jobs and beginning to find more secure financial footing as they pay their mortgages, gas

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and grocery bills.

Last month's news is good for Ohio's workers and the rest of America as we see real economic growth and job creation. Overall, the U.S. economy has added more than 1.1 million jobs since last summer, according to the DOL. During the same time period, the nation's unemployment rate dropped from 6.3 percent in June 2003 to 5.6 percent in April 2004, a level that is below the average unemployment rate for the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In the past three quarters, economic growth has averaged 5.5 percent – the fastest rate in two decades.

Real GDP is also growing at a rate of 5.6 percent – the fastest in nearly 20 years. Household wealth has reached a record high of \$44 trillion dollars with real disposable personal income increasing at an annual rate of 3.9 percent. The U.S. stock market is also up 18% and more manufacturers have been reporting increased activity and new orders than at any time in the last 20 years. This can only mean more jobs as we continue to do our part here in Congress, supporting a pro-growth agenda and welcoming continued economic growth and prosperity.

Economic Taskforce: The House Jobs Action Team

In order to ensure the Congress continues to pursue those pieces of legislation that will keep our economy moving forward and spur economic growth and recovery, last month I joined 30 of my colleagues on the newly formed "Jobs Action Team" in the House of Representatives.

This group of House members is taking the lead to promote policies aimed at maintaining the latest surge in job growth. America has always been a land of innovative entrepreneurs, hard working laborers, sharp professionals and the most productive industries, yet, our regulatory, judicial and tax environments are impeding companies from prospering here.

Over the next few weeks our Team will continue to focus the congressional agenda on keeping America competitive in the global marketplace, trade fairness, energy self-sufficiency and security and ending lawsuit abuse and litigation management. These issues are part of a larger competitiveness agenda that began in May with our focus on relieving the tax burden on the American people and will be highlighted further in the coming weeks.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Jobs Action Team as we strive to eliminate much of the bureaucratic red tape and regulation that impedes growth in America.



Congressman Gillmor Tours Defiance College

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Focus on the Fifth District: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Loan Award



Congressman Gillmor presents an award check to the American Broadband and Telecommunications Company in Norwalk, Ohio

On May 7th of this year, I was happy to be on hand in Norwalk to announce a \$416,000 USDA loan to the American Broadband & Telecommunications Company. American Broadband received one of only 20 rural broadband and telecommunications loans approved nationally.

This loan will allow for the purchase and installation of new equipment that will increase broadband service throughout Sandusky, Huron and Williams counties. This will connect

more than 14,000 new subscribers which will, no doubt, come as welcome news to residents in those areas.

The monies received by the American Broadband & Telecommunications Company are part of a national \$190 million funding effort involving 19 states.

It is worth mentioning that last month, President Bush announced a national goal for broadband communications, stating "we ought to have ... universal, affordable access for broadband technology by the year 2007". The President understands the role broadband technology will play in our economy and how it will raise our standard of living. I couldn't agree more and applaud the work being done by the American Broadband & Telecommunications Company in that area.

June Casework Onsites

One of my goals as Congressman is to make sure that casework services are readily available to all my constituents. Unfortunately, the size of our sixteen county district makes travel to my Defiance, Tiffin, or Norwalk offices prohibitive for many. In order to ensure that my staff is accessible to all my constituents, I have scheduled



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casework onsites in Wyandot and Huron Counties as follows:

Thursday, June 24, 2004
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Village of Sycamore
Council Chambers
123 North Sycamore Avenue
Sycamore, OH

Thursday, June 24, 2004
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Village of New London
Council Chambers
115 East Main Street
New London, OH

If you are in the area, I encourage you to stop by and my staff will be happy to assist you with any problems you are having with the federal government.

Contact Me

If you have any suggestions on topics you would like to see addressed in my monthly updates, require any additional information, or would like to inform me of your views on matters concerning the federal government, please contact me anytime in Washington, DC or in any of my Ohio offices.

If you wish to forward your questions or concerns via U.S. mail, please address your correspondence to one of my Ohio offices as mail sent to the Longworth House Office Building in Washington is subject to a lengthy screening process and may not reach my office in a timely manner.